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## EDITORIAL

The word Christmas signifies God's gift of Christ to the world. However, in order to fully comprehend Christmas, it is necessary to think beyond the initial gift entailed in Christ's birth. Christ gave of himself in devotion to God's work on earth.

How many of us follow his example and give of ourselves in all that we do? We, as students, receive the opportunity of obtaining knowledge. To what extent do we respond to this great gift? Half-hearted preparation for our classes and last minute cramming for tests are insufficient responses. Even conscientious perusal of text books and concentration on professors' lectures are not enough. If we truly devote ourselves to our work as students, we must go beyond mere duty in fulfilling assignments. Means of learning outside the classroom do exist on this campus. Our library contains books through which we may investigate a variety of fields. Prominent scholars lecture here frequently on a variety of subjects, from "The Tragic World of Eugene O'Neill" to "Science and Academic Freedom in Russia". The plays presented by the Drama Department enable us to view the outstanding works of such diverse authors as Shakespeare and Tennessee Williams. Our art exhibits demonstrate some of the finest contemporary painting and our concert series brings us distinguished musicians.

Do we give of our time and mental faculties to obtain all the knowledge made available in these ways? Even as Christ gave of himself, we must endeavor to give of ourselves in our work as students.

June Cecile Kyzer



## IN HIS PLACE

Virginia Nettles '58

As more and more the bright young people were breaking away into the colleges and big cities, Parktown became dominated by the elderly. The decrease in population had started in the thirties when the Deisel came and laid off the coal workers. From that time a leakage had continued steadily. The young people kept leaving because Parktown, at some mysterious point, had just stopped changing. There were still hitchposts on the sidewalks of Alleghany Street; movies were still not shown on Sundays; gossip columns crowded out news in the "Daily Eagle." They left also because the little city, built up around the freight yards, was gloomy: There was always a lonely whistle blowing in the night, and the dull clangor of cars hitching together. Besides, the old steam engine had left over the terrain a layer of soot that, like the blood on Lady Macbeth's hands could not be washed away. It had turned the frame houses grey and made even the grass a dirty shade. Alice Bidwell, leaving for New York City, had replied to the remonstrances of her mother, "There's nothing more fitting than that the graveyard should be at the entrance of this town!"

The elderly elite lived on Alleghany Street, a gloomy elm-lined avenue straddling the side of a mountain and ending abruptly at a cliff. The old people were unaware of the strangeness of their lives in an era of television and flying machines. Although many of them had been neighbors since they first settled there as brides, they still pulled out sacheted gloves for "afternoon calls" in homes two doors away. They sat in darkened parlors and discussed in polite subdued tones—lineages, politics and scandal. They held opinions which, like the set of Mrs. Bidwell's white hair, and the mournful hue of Mrs. Darby's dress, would never be changed again.

Since Mrs. Darby was not well enough to leave her home, Mrs. Bidwell and Mrs. Satterfield called on her one afternoon to tell her about the recent meeting of the United Daughters of the Confederacy. Mrs. Bidwell's beady eyes glistened with amusement as she narrated the two rather shocking incidents that had occurred, although one, she added, had had most gratifying results.

Plump, gentle-mannered Mrs. Darby, still wearing black for Mayor Darby, who had died eighteen years ago, directed an interested look at Mrs. Bidwell, who was always a spokesman for their group. She was a mite awed by Mrs.

Bidwell. Her scathing wit and her inflexible prejudices had made her for many people a terrible, unforgiving foe. If Mrs. Darby had at any time considered breaking away from the pattern a little, sitting on her porch in a housecoat perhaps, or not carrying gloves for a social call, the thought of Mrs. Bidwell in her rocking chair in front of her window, convinced her to stay behind the Victorian line.

The first incident did elicit a slight gasp from Mrs. Darby. Someone, who must not have known the background of the woman, had been prevailed upon to suggest Mrs. Linton's name for UDC membership. Mrs. Bidwell smiled wryly when she recalled the stunned amazement of the group. She considered it a rather amusing happening. After all, a majority of the members were old enough to remember that Mrs. Linton had kept company with her husband while he was merely separated from his first wife, and there was no real danger of her being elected. Mrs. Satterfield said that it should not be taken too lightly, however, for Character was one of the essential UDC qualifications.

The ladies then told Mrs. Darby that they were very pleased with the Congressman whom they had been fortunate enough to get as their Speaker. They knew now that he stood firm. He had not "shilly-shallied". It was concerning him that the other disaster had occurred. That weird little Mrs. Smith, the wife of the new young doctor, had been permitted to attend the meeting, although she was not a member. She had repaid their kindness by having the audacity to rise and ask the Congressman how he reconciled his stand on segregation with the teachings of the Bible. Well, he had not floundered for a reply.

"Madam," he had answered, "do you see this glass of clear water? Now watch this ink pen." He had squirted the ink into the glass and then had held the murky water to the light. "There is no more clear water. That is my justification."

"The Congressman is really a most intelligent and clever gentleman," said Mrs. Satterfield.

"I dare say," said Mrs. Darby, "but I don't know. I just don't like to talk about it. I'm almost glad Mr. Darby didn't have to live to see the day."

There was a momentary silence. The women sat with their hands folded stiffly in their laps, their legs crossed at the ankles.

"We saw old Tom and Hattie out front, Mrs.



Darby," said Mrs. Bidwell with her wry smile.

This was a pleasant change, Mrs. Darby felt. Everyone liked old Tom. "He is the only colored person I can honestly say I respect," she often heard said of him. Why was it they liked him? She could hardly remember his speaking more than his usual humble "Yas'm". She herself had often said, "He's so kind to the children," but she knew that wasn't strictly accurate. True, the grandchildren did love to follow the path of the mower on a summer day, playing, barefooted, in the cool new-mown grass. Sometimes when the machine was cut off or while he was putting it back in the shed, they would speak to him.

They always spoke to him with familiarity and ease.

"Say, Tom—I got a new bicycle. Yesterday was my birthday."

"You don't say! I declare!" he would reply, and then chuckle. "I used to have to ride my sister's. It's kind of embarrassing to pass a group of guys on a girl's bike."

Tom would bob his head and chuckle some more. She could not remember that questions ever seemed to occur to him.

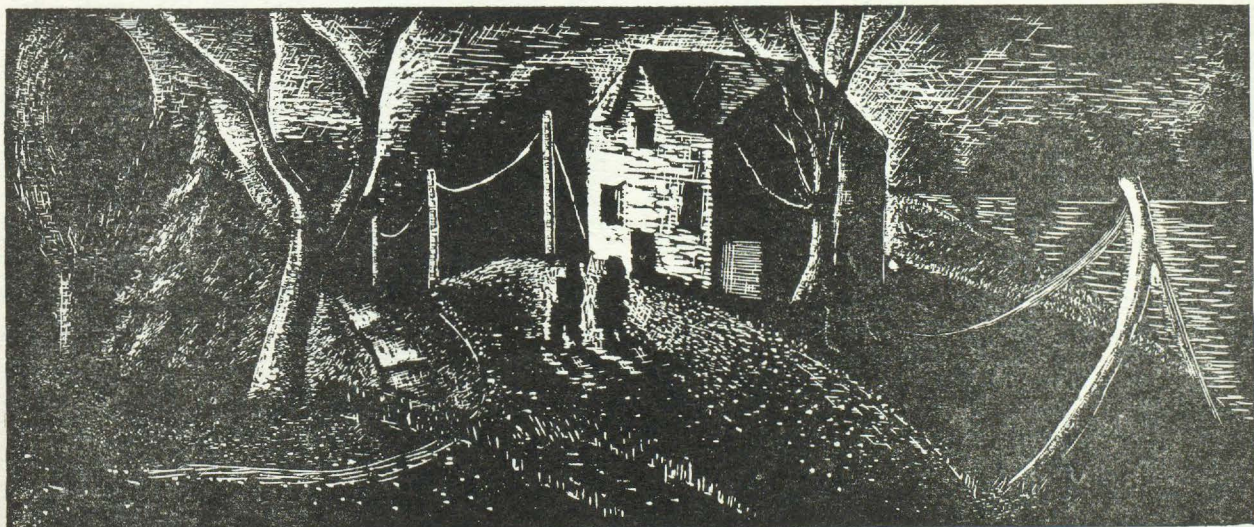
The children were excited when Tom was coming. As for him, he accepted their presences placidly; If they didn't speak, he didn't seem to notice them. She knew he never remembered their names.

The ladies gathered in amusement around the window, spying on Tom. It was funny to see tall, stooped Tom mowing steadily across the lawn while the patient, half-crazed Negro woman waited for him on Mrs. Darby's front walk, muttering to the mangy dog she cradled in her arms like a baby. The suppers she knew no better than to wear for shoes, dangled from her black feet. The last time she had been hired to serve table, aristocratic Mrs. Satterfield had waited an embarrassingly long time with the new parson at the table for Hattie to bring in the hot dishes. Finally she excused herself and found Hattie sitting placidly on the kitchen stool. Mrs. Satterfield discovered that the demented woman was waiting for an electric bell to ring to summon her to the table. She had completely forgotten that no one had the bells any more, not since the days when she started service as a girl. Since that time they only gave her old clothes and kitchen scraps when she came to their back doors begging for work. Hattie's working days were over.

Although her memory was going, Mrs. Darby reflected, she never forgot the judge's sentence. It seemed to have penetrated into the deepest part of her brain, some part where the foggiest could not reach.

For years it had been a weekly cycle: Tom getting drunk on Saturday nights and acting

Continued on page 16



Old House

Woodcut

Virginia Mosely



## THE GREAT GOD BROWN

Virginia Nettles '58

There has been a recent revival of interest in the plays of Eugene O'Neill, "playwright of the individual." Perhaps this, as well as the Billy Graham religious revival, that has packed crowds even in sophisticated New York, points to a growing concern about our inward lives. Although we are sending planets into the air and are creating life in the laboratory, we still do not know who we are. We hope we are not God.

Eugene O'Neill wrote too recently to be placed accurately in any hierarchy of playwrights. There are critics who would place him near Shakespeare and the Greek tragedians and still others who would squeeze him in somewhere near Arthur Miller. However, he is generally believed to be the greatest of the American playwrights. His objectives had a Miltonic scope. In "The Great God Brown," Mary Washington Players next production of the season, he attempts nothing less than to present, symbolically, the whole history of man's life—the hungry, groping inward man, and the masked self he shows to others. This quality of selves he expresses by having the actors actually wearing masks at those times that the character has assumed a false personality.

His conflict is resolved by O'Neill into a basic difference between the Billy Browns and the Dion Anthonys. Billy belongs to that untroubled clan that Thomas Wolfe has called, a little enviously, "the fair and the blue-eyed"; those who can slip effortlessly into the pattern of things; those who can always belong to something; those who are fortunate enough to be born blind. Billy Browns strive to gain what is currently on the altar of society. In the Middle Ages they became knights and slew dragons for the kiss of a damsel and for the ruzzans of the populace, but O'Neill's play is set in Twentieth Century America, and Billy Brown is a successful business man, a worshipper of Mammon.

Dion Anthony comes into this world with his eyes wide open, and kicking the bars of his crib. As a child he must see that life is fused with evil, that friends are envious, that lovers are as sightless as the others, and, refusing the comfort of a God, he must clap on a mask to protect himself. It is the well-worn mask of the "artiste": the charming cynical Bad Boy Pan, throwing rocks at conventions; the sneering and suave Mephistopheles, tear-

ing down Temples. Inwardly, Dion is like the melancholy figure in the Gardner cartoon, moaning to himself over his nighball, "Give me something to build a dream on." He yearns for a faith.

The plot is quadrangular. In High School Dion and Billy both love Margaret. Margaret loves the mask of Dion. She, too, is one of "the fair and the blue-eyed, the prettiest girl in the senior class, the sweet romantic, eternal girl-woman. Like our Mothers who were thrilled by the shoe-eyed Valentino because he was so mysterious and cruel, she loves Dion because he is "so different from all the others. He can paint beautifully and write poetry and he plays and sings and dances so marvelously." She marries Dion, and in all their married life never sees behind the mask she loves. When Dion dies Billy takes his Mask and steals his place in Margaret's life. Margaret never knows the difference continuing to love the mask of Dion. She is happily married and a devoted wife.

Billy soon understands why Dion had willed him his mask. He suffers, as Dion had suffered, because he wants Margaret to love him for himself. Only Cybel, wearing the rouged mask of the prostitute, understands them both. "Stop hiding. I know you," she had told Dion, and from that day he had gone to her often so that he might relax and take off his Mask. The acquisitive Brown had gone to her at first only because he hoped to buy her away from his rival. But eventually they both learned from her a Philosophy of acceptance.

She teaches them bluntly that the only way to get on in this world is to know yourself and where you stand with Nature; to know that your life is of no importance, and that at your death, assuredly, "the sun will be rising again."; to know that you are born alone, and are lucky if anyone ever knows you, and are thrice-blessed if you are ever loved; to know that even fame is a matter of chance; and yet to rest in the faith that, although your life is only an infinitesimal particle in the great cycle of breeding and dying, the spirit of the inner man, that seeks love and truth, is sacred.

Billy, dying in Cybel's arms, comprehends at last.

"I don't want justice. I want love."

"There is only love," she comforts him and teaches him to pray before he sleeps, "Our Father—Who Art!"



## "ACQUAINTED WITH THE NIGHT" 1

Ernestine Hill '60

"I have been one acquainted with the night." / Being an intimate companion, I have felt her closeness and breathed in her many fragrances. Her thick, musty oppressiveness has been as much a part of me as her free, uplifting crispness. Her scorching breath, her soothing tears—I have felt them both.

"I have walked out in rain—and back in rain." / As I have walked, I have seen her spring rains cooling and cleansing my city, and I have seen winter's refuse crowd the gutter's swollen streams. In summer my companion spits her steaming saliva onto the streets of my city, and the drops sizzle as bacon does when frying too rapidly. Fog, suffocating and intoxicating, envelops me in the fall. In winter my friend sends brittle sheets of ice to coat my hat and boots and to bend my weary shoulders with its weight. Loneliness accompanies all this, but still I find comfort in the dampness. For me this dampness forms a protective blanket that cushions me from the sharper realities of life by day.

"I have outwalked the furthest city light." / My companion has often taken me away from hustling humanity, past headlight-studded highways, to lonely stretches of twisting paths. Here for a moment I am able to lose all worry, all care, all sense of time and direction. My mind at rest, I move mechanically along the overgrown trails.

"I have looked down the saddest city lane." /

My friend has led me through cluttered alleys where garbage pour their refuse onto the street, where alley cat and yellow cur religiously exchange war cries, where shells of former individuals wander aimlessly as though they were habitual sleepwalkers. Depression becomes almost overpowering. I cry out to my companion, "Am I as one of these?" Selfpity creeps upon me.

"I have passed by the watchman on his beat and dropped my eyes, unwilling to explain." / I become suddenly shy, ashamed, and even fearful of being seen. I feel almost as though the watchman could detect my innermost thoughts by merely glancing into my face. Often I run.

"I have stood still and stopped the sound of feet when far away an interrupted cry came over houses from another street, but not to call me back or say good-by" / Although my companion is close, her sounds—the baby's wailing, the drunkard's muttering, the vicious quarrelling and soft weeping, the plaintive cry of the riverboat's fog horn—all seem distant, unrelated to me.

"And further still at an unearthly height, one luminary clock against the sky proclaimed the time was neither wrong nor right. I have been one acquainted with the night."

1. Title and all quotes at beginnings of paragraphs from "Acquainted With the Night" by Robert Frost.

## aefnung

Natalie Robins '60

how quiet the moon shines  
its rays whisper the night  
into a glorious slumber  
how still the wind

the noise of eve wakens not  
it lulls the resting life  
how strange the night  
how sweet the night

## I LEAP

Lou Miller '58

Trailing dust stars  
In my path  
I leap.  
And having leapt  
I weep.  
For nothing leaves to do  
But leap again  
And nothing's left to weep  
But weeping rain.



## NIGGER

Betty Desmond '59

Kitty sat on the linoleum floor trying to button her sunsuit. She wished for a pin to jab into Pearl's fat rear end that hung over the edges of the kitchen chair. From her seat on the floor Kitty pretended that two balloons, instead of the maid, were in the chair. "I can't button my sunsuit," Kitty whined.

"You is mo' trouble dan you is worth. Come heah," Pearl said with a sigh. "Now run outside an' play."

Kitty jumped up and ran to the door. She opened the screen door as wide as it would go. She held her breath and waited for Pearl to tell her to stop letting the flies in.

"Shut dat do' befo' de flies eat us alive," Pearl shrieked. "Go play with Jean."

Triumphantly Kitty slammed the door as hard as she could.

The late morning sun was hot on her shoulders after she had been in the cool kitchen. Kitty decided to go barefooted. She took her shoes and socks off, but put her socks back on so the grass wouldn't tickle her feet.

Kitty didn't see Jean in the yard next door. Jean's mama wouldn't let her play in the sun because of her red hair. Kitty had asked Mama why Jean's hair kept her from playing in the sun. Mama had explained, "The sun would give Jean freckles." Kitty had wanted to know what freckles were.

"They are brown spots all over your skin."

"If Jean got in the sun would she get brown like Pearl?"

Mama smiled and said, "No, not exactly."

"Why not Mama?" Mama didn't answer.

"Why wouldn't Jean look like Pearl, Mama?"

"Oh, I don't know."

"Why not, Mama?" begged Kitty. She kept asking but Mama told her to see if Daddy was coming. Kitty decided that Pearl must have played in the sun too much when she was little.

Kitty went over to the fence. G. L. was in his yard two doors down the block. She knew she wasn't supposed to play with G. L. Her mother had said that nice little girls don't play with tough boys. Pearl might not care if she went down to G. L.'s house for a minute. Kitty tiptoed back to the kitchen door and peeped in. Pearl was eating peanut butter out of the jar with a spoon. She was looking at Daddy's magazine that had a lot of pictures of ladies in sunsuits.

Now certain that Pearl wouldn't mind, Kitty climbed through her special hole in the fence

and ran across Mrs. Thornhill's back yard to where G. L. was digging holes in the apple tree with a pocket knife.

"Where'd you get that knife," she asked.

"It's mine," G. L. retorted.

"No, it isn't."

"Yes, it is."

Does your mama know you've got a knife?" "No."

"I'm gonna tell her."

"I forgot. She knows I've got it."

"I won't tell her if you'll let me play with it."

"You're too little. Only boys can have knives."

"Can I hold it?"

"You might drop it."

"I'm gonna tell your mama."

"Okay, you can hold it for just a minute."

Kitty took the knife. It was cool and smooth in her palm. She tried to cut the strap of her sunsuit with it.

"It's no good. It won't cut anything."

She kept trying but it wouldn't cut.

"Try the tree," G. L. advised.

By pressing as hard as she could Kitty made a mark on the bark of the tree. She began to dig a little hole with the end of the blade.

"Here comes Jean," said G. L. "We don't want to play with her. She's a scaredy cat."

"My mama says when Jean grows up she'll be brown like Pearl," Kitty importantly informed G. L.

"Here comes Jean, the scaredy-cat," G. L. chanted.

"Jean is turning brown," chimed Kitty.

"Jean is the brown scaredy-cat," they shrieked and laughed.

Jean stuck out her tongue and ran back to her yard. Giggling at their cleverness, G. L. and Kitty ran after her, shouting louder than before.

"Kitty, you get in dis house dis minute," Pearl called "You not sposed to be out of yo yard."

"I gotta go," Kitty told G. L. Moving as slowly as possible she carefully ignored her hole in the fence and walked around to the gate. Conscientiously closing it after her she dragged her feet up the walk to where Pearl waited for her.

"What did you all do to Jean?" demanded Pearl. "You is de wors' child I has ever seen." She glared down at Kitty. "Where is yo shoes?"



Look at them grass stains on them socks you just put on clean dis mawnin'. Come in dis house. I'se gwine tell yo mama on you. You eats yo lunch and den you goes to bed."

Kitty made a ceremony of washing her hands for lunch. To postpone the nap she ate lunch in nibbles. When she blew bubbles in her milk Pearl decided it was time to go to bed.

"You lay real still and don't let me hear a sound from you. If you make noise I'se gwine tell yo mama what a bad girl you was today," Pearl threatened.

Kitty played her Steps Game going upstairs. She went up two steps and back one. On every step she whispered, "Pearl is hateful."

"Don't poke so," Pearl called to her.

Kitty hurried up the remaining steps, stomping as hard as she could on each one. She went to the window and stood there with her nose pressed against the pane. Pearl had washed windows yesterday, but there was dirt left in the corners. Last night Mama had told Aunt Avy that Pearl had just washed windows. Aunt Avy had said, "She didn't do a very good job of it. Look at the corners."

Running her fingers in the corners now, as Aunt Avy had done last night, Kitty drew back a dusty finger.

Mama had said, "I know, but I can't say anything to her about it. You know how they are, and it's so hard to get a maid these days."

Kitty had wondered who "they" were until Aunt Avy answered Mama, using a strange word that Kitty connected with the whispering of grown-ups when they spelled some of the words. Whenever grown-ups started talking like this, Mama always said, "Kitty, run outside and see if Jean's out there" or "I wonder what's on T. V., Kitty."

Aunt Avy had said, "Yes, I know what you mean. All niggers are alike. They even smell the same." Aunt Avy made a funny face. Her face reminded Kitty of the time she had showed Aunt Avy her handful of lightning bugs. Some of the bugs had been mashed.

Coming in the room Kitty had asked, "Mama, why can't you fuss at Pearl about the windows?"

Mama hadn't paid any attention to Kitty. Mama and Aunt Avy kept on talking about lazy niggers.

"Mama, what's a nigger? Is Pearl a nigger?"

Mama had looked at Kitty and said, "Little pitchers have such big ears

Kitty wondered what little pitchers were but didn't find out because Aunt Avy had heard Jean calling Kitty.

Kitty didn't want to go to sleep, but there was nothing to do. She tiptoed into Mama's room. She liked Mama's room because there were so many interesting things to do. Mama's house dress was on the bed, and the things that

Mama used to make herself pretty were on the dresser. Kitty tried to use the scissor-like things that made Mama's eyelashes suck out, but she didn't know how. She couldn't catch hold of her eyelashes with them. Kitty smeared some of the red stuff that made Mama look like Santa Claus on her cheeks. The lipstick got on her teeth and her nose. When she finished using the different powders and perfumes Kitty felt like a real grown-up lady. Rubbing her eyebrows with her finger, like Mama always did, Kitty admired herself in the mirror.

"Kitty, is you in bed?"

The steps groaned as Pearl came upstairs. Kitty waited while Pearl looked for her. Pearl came into Mama's room and threw up her hands when she saw Kitty preening before the mirror.

"Oh, mah goodness! Look what you has done now. Your Mama is gonna skin you alive when she comes home. Look where you has spilt perfume on her dresser. I'se gonna tell her for sure, and you is gonna get the whippin' of yo life"

"I don't care if you do tell Mama," Kitty screamed in defiance. "She doesn't like you anyway. Mama says you don't get the windows clean, and Aunt Avy says you smell bad. Nigger!"

Pearl didn't move or say anything. She looked the way Jean did the time G. L. punched her in the stomach with his baseball bat. Pearl didn't seem to see Kitty anymore. The maid turned and went downstairs.

Kitty kept on playing grown-up, but it wasn't fun anymore. She heard high heels clicking on the front porch and paper bags crackling. Kitty started to run downstairs but stopped to put the tops back on the perfume bottles. She ran into the bathroom and wiped her face on a towel.

Sneaking down the steps she could hear Pearl talking to Mama in the Kitchen.

"It's no good trying to change my mind. Miz Gordon, I is quitting right now. I can't handle dat chile. Nobody 'preciates how hard I has to work around here."

Kitty didn't wait to hear what Mama said. She ran upstairs to her room. In a few minutes Kitty heard the front door slam. Then Mama came upstairs and went in her room. Kitty wondered what Mama had bought downtown, but she didn't want to go see. By this time Mama had seen her dresser. Kitty thought she better stay in her own room.

"Kitty, come here," Mama called.

When Kitty came into the room Mama was standing with her back to the dresser and the hair brush in her hand. Kitty knew what the hair brush meant.

"Mama, I won't do it again," Kitty said.

Mama looked like she was going to cry. "Pearl just quit. What am I going to do for a



maid now. Why can't you ever behave?"

"Mama, I didn't do anything. Please don't spank me. I didn't do anything." Kitty started crying.

"Oh, yes, you did. You made Pearl quit. I am going to spank you."

"I didn't do anything to Pearl. Don't spank me. What did I do?"

"You know what you said to Pearl." Mama began to hit Kitty's bottom with the brush. The bristles stung, and Kitty howled.

Kitty said, "You said it too. I heard you say it." Mama stopped hitting Kitty and put the brush down.

"You and Aunt Avy both said it. Mama,

"Because you made Pearl quit, and I'll never be able to get another maid. Isn't that reason enough? Now go outside. I'm tired."

"But why?" sobbed Kitty.

"You heard me. Now go outside."

Sniffling Kitty went down the steps and out into the backyard. G. L. came up from his yard.

"Did you get a spanking? Why are you crying?" he asked.

"What did I really do wrong?" Kitty wondered. "Why did I get the spanking? Mama never said."

"I don't know," Kitty answered gloomily. She brightened up. "Let's go see if nigger Jean can come play in the sun."

## THE SEASONS IN MUSIC

Norma Skinner '58

Winter is the old woman of the seasons. Her hairs are white, slender icicles, her eyes are two small evergreen trees and her mouth is a bright, rumbling fireplace. The beauty and solemnity of a winter night is like a Mozart Symphony. The music is delicately woven, but, underneath, it is as hard and strong as the limbs of a pine holding heavy loads of fine snow.

I feel I could almost touch the intimacy of a spring day. I smell the aroma of new cut grass with its hint of onion. I expect the buds and flowers to grow to maturity under my eyes. Stravinsky's "Rite of Spring" holds this same sense of hidden growth; this feeling that the world is about to spin before my eyes and summer flash to life with the last note.

If summer did come into musical existence, it would certainly do so with the opening notes of Debussy's "Afternoon of a Faun." Even as the dark clouds of a storm give warning of the

violence and petulance in nature, this music has an undercurrent of brooding emotion. The air of summer is hung with heady sweetness, very stifling. I feel lethargic and languishing. My senses are crowded with a chimeric vision, but my dream is broken as the last note dies.

Fall comes to life in my mind with the wild opening beat of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. Fall is that season of the year in which nature seems to be gradually adjusting herself to the hard insuperable reality of the coming winter. Flecked, red, gold, and brown covers the earth vivid, warm, lavish and frenzied; a warning that we must drop from our minds, hearts and souls all past disillusionment or sluggishness, even as the trees lay bare their limbs to ready themselves for the strain of the winter storms. Even thus does Beethoven shake his fist in the face of fate; I will not let you conquer me, oh, life!



## THE SECOND ANNUAL EXHIBITION

Lou Miller '58

Painting can be said to be a plastic, communicable expression of beauty. What then is beauty? Is the common element of beauty in so-called beautiful things or in our attitudes to them? We all bring to our consideration of beautiful objects a great deal of information and a great many mental habits and associations. These of course, influence our judgement. There is the simple fact of familiarity. On the other hand, things which we find very different and unfamiliar may excite us to experience the same sensing of beauty as with the familiar. It is as individual as we are. However, the general concept of beauty and the beautiful can be a cliché. Information, habit, association can become so integrated with our consideration of the beautiful that we have little room to grow. We become stilted and unable to experience the new elements of beauty.

There are new elements of beauty in paint-

ing. Artists are struggling, have been struggling to express a newness, a freshness in painting with as much vigor and foresight as our scientists. This effort could be readily perceived in the Second Mary Washington Annual Exhibit of Contemporary Art. The exhibit included fifty-one paintings from the Western World. In those fifty-one paintings were found at least as many means of expression. Yet each painting reflected an inner struggle by the artist to create something exciting, something newly beautiful. Such has it been since the beginning of art. Each new phase of painting must be a re-evaluation, and evolution of beauty. We, too, must re-evaluate, must put aside our conventional concepts, must project our curiosity and understanding so that we, too, might grow. And, how can we possibly comprehend the art of tomorrow without understanding the art of today?

### PLATERO Y YO

Bernice Bramson '58

The University of Texas Press has recently published a complete translation of Juan Ramon Jimenez' prose elegy, *Platero y Yo*. Responsible for introducing the sturdy silver donkey, Platero, and his poetic owner to the English reader is Miss Eloise Roach who has done an excellent job in translating the work.

In both versions Jimenez takes the reader through the four seasons of the year introducing him along the way to the Andalusian countryside, to the townspeople of Moguer, and above all to his constant companion, Platero. Platero is the hero. The book is about the small donkey and his feelings, expressed beautifully in the lyric prose of the author. Jimenez imparts to the donkey his own extreme sensitivity to nature and to human emotions and makes Platero react in a human-like fashion to everyday situations.

Happiness and grief are coupled throughout the book. Platero delights in the company of a small girl who soon passes away, in the presence of the little village idiot who also dies, in the simple playfulness of the towns poorer

children who love him dearly. He loves the country, the vineyards, the pines, the swallows and spends hours with his owner in silent communion with nature. Jimenez knows exactly how to express the simple emotions which a simple rustic life arouses and does it superbly in *Platero y Yo*.

In the translation, Miss Roach does not distort the subtle directness of the colloquial Spanish dialogue nor does she decrease the meaningfulness of the short sketches, each one containing a certain element of wisdom and human sympathy. Through careful selection of words and phrases she captures in English the song-like atmosphere and entrancing quality present in the Spanish language. Jimenez' prose is extremely poetic and musical presenting a difficult task even to the most experienced translator but Miss Roach handles it admirably giving to *Platero and I* the same light, sensuous touch that makes the Spanish work charming and enjoyable reading.





## SISTERS

Elaine Freedman '60

She lay in the quiet darkness listening to the breathing girl beside her. A faint beam from a lantern crept through the lattice and glowed upon only half of the face of the girl in slumber. The covering of the face was soft, unblemished, and warm with sleep. The rounded features blended softly into the light which illuminated the face and crept through the rich dark curls on the white ruff. She loved that sleeping girl; she loved her sister more than anyone else.

She lay there in the darkness and thought about their childhood together. Her sister had always been older, smarter, prettier, and more well-liked than she had ever been. Everyone liked Lisa, the sweet and charming child. Because Lisa had always drawn all the attention, the little sister had always remained unnoticed. She, too, had always loved Lisa, but childish jealousy had always formed a barrier of quarrels, harsh words, fights and tears between them. She remembered well her fourteenth year—the year during which she had not spoken even one word to the person she loved and admired more than anyone else. She could laugh at that now when she was snug and secure in their deep bond of affection; but, when silence was their only bond, tears were the result: hidden, concealed tears. Childhood was Past. Only the happy present existed.

As she lay there pondering over the past, thoughts of the future came into being. She wondered when Lisa would marry and leave her; when her sister would abandon the truest friendship of her life. The girl tried to imagine life without her sister. Suppose Lisa should die . . . Lisa . . . dead. Her throat began to

tighten; she could not sleep; she could not cease to imagine Lisa dead . . . dead. The funeral became vivid in her mind. Mourners from everywhere: the family, Lisa's friends, her friends, family friends, distant relatives, prominent town's-people, the workers, and Lisa's numerous lovers—all looking with hearts stricken with permanent sadness. They would look at Lisa's sister too. They would pity her, and, when she clutched for her sister's dead body, they would gently ease her away, hold her, comfort her. She, in black attire, with gleaming blue-black hair, white face, and eyes shining with grief would be much pitied and comforted. The attention of the mourners would be drawn to her, the little sister left alone. The wet pillow cooled her hot impassioned face as she slipped into slumber. Because she knew what she must do, nothing was able to cool the future in her mind.

Many people came that day. The family, pale, speechless, sat in the small drawing room. Friends awkwardly uttered their sympathies. Uncle Charlie sat with the family for the first time in eight years. Judge Pitts seemed quite proud that his wreath was the largest that the family had received. The workers did nothing but stare. The young men also stared. Through the minds and the low whispers went the thought: "She had no reason to want death. Why did she do it? Why dear God, Why?"

As the lid of the casket was closed over the mangled body that had fallen through the warm night air to the cold, crushing earth below, all eyes and minds were upon the sister, who stood sobbing as the young man held her, comforted her.

## THE INSANE

Sally Marriott '59

See them standing in their cells  
Miserable—half-human

Unable to provide, create, or enjoy

Because of weaknesses.

Behind the bars like some forgotten  
simian—

They grovel—

humble, servile, apathetic

Release is not part of the plan . . .

They'll rot away to oblivion

Forget them

they were once human . . .



## ILLUSION

Harriet Klohr '58

When I was a very little girl I lived by the sea. Every day I used to sit on a big gray rock and watch the clipper ships go by. Mama said that it wasn't a sea at all, and of course there were no clipper ships. "It's just a river, dear," she'd say. But I knew better. I knew it was a sea, and I knew about the ships, too. They came from Bengal, and Cape Horn and some place called the River Area in France where it was warm and the sky didn't turn deep gray and the wind wasn't from the east. They had sails, white sails like heavenly birds—maybe angels. Usually there were seven, and the third one was best. It had a figurehead on the front, a beautiful lady with golden hair and a blue dress, it was. When I got to be old I would look just like her, be like her and go to Bengal and Cape Horn and the River Area. One day she smiled at me as she went past, but I didn't tell Mamma. Mamma wouldn't like it if I smiled with strange ladies by the sea.

There were gulls, too. They were black

sometimes and white sometimes, but mostly both. They cried when the ships went by. I heard their voices and it was very sad. Perhaps they would die in the cold sea. I'd never know, of course.

The wind was cold. My red coat was not so thick and the hood kept falling off. I didn't mind because then I could hear the gulls better. They told me things—things I promised I'd never tell, but now I can't remember.

Mamma came to get me. My face was hot, she said. I would be ill. People in white, not sails, not gulls, were around me; there were smells, not sea scents of salt and seaweed, but something else...

When I was better I went back again to my rock to look at my sea. I sat for a long time, and watched for the clipper ships, but they never came. The gulls cried, and I cried, too. After a while I left and went back into the house to read my book with the blue-gray cover.

## showers, from a train

Natalie Robins '60

falling drops  
dismal rust  
appears on road  
of iron  
sleep enticing  
from loneliness  
roar, roar, roar

greysome sky  
freightens all  
hazy windows  
screens out towns  
whiz, whiz, whiz

incessent sparkles  
won't they tire  
wiping filth yet  
blurring light  
how bleak  
I feel  
drone, drone, drone

## THE PRESENT IS PAST

Elaine Freedman '60

Look now, for, when the eye closes,  
the present is past.  
you laugh, you cry, you feel  
but the emotion is fleeting—  
only to become a vague  
remembrance.

Look now: as an artist gazing upon his work  
involved, yet apart.  
His body is filled with emotion,  
but his objective view affords  
deeper appreciation.

as a reader living vicariously.  
He is the character;  
yet, sitting in his chair,  
the episode is before him.

Look now Youth; Look now Lover!  
All must look now.  
laugh, cry, feel—from afar  
for, when the eye closes,  
the present is past.





The Shepherd

Jean Miller

## IN HIS PLACE

Continued From page 6

wild in the streets, a policeman lugging him behind bars where old Judge Parker berated him, even sometimes pleaded with him, and finally let him go on a promise of reform, which the Judge, and everyone else, knew would be broken the next Saturday. The Judge shared the townfolks' sympathy for Tom. He said he certainly didn't want to send him to the penitentiary though it would be the certain end if he didn't mend his ways. He had tried everything he knew to help him. Earlier judges had perhaps been misled at first by Tom's bowed head and nervous hands to think he was really penitent, but Judge Parker was too wise from the start not to know that he was only going through a rote. It was inevitable that he should play the part. It was a recognition of White Folk's law. Like a dog, he did not understand, but knew what he was expected to do when given the sign. He always aimed to please; he said what his ancestors had taught him White Folks wanted. It was

not exactly lying.

Finally the Judge made it law upon pain of heavy fine, that liquor was not to be sold to Tom. Braddock at "The Tavern" had said it nearly broke his heart to deny the pleading old man. "After all, it's all the poor devil wants out of life." However, the law would have been kept, except that bootleggers seeped into the town from the mountains and sold it to him under cover. Parker was back where he had started.

Necessity drove him to that remarkable decree. He was not a whimsical man. He was only being resourceful. But this sentence was the stuff of which legend is made.

All the old people knew about that court room scene. As the three old ladies stood by the window they discussed it again, although it had occurred nearly a decade ago.

The Judge had given the sentence formally, in his black robe, to impress it the more strongly upon the old Negro. Tom was brought from his cell by a guard. If he was amazed to find that they had brought Hattie there, he did not show it. Except for a few policemen, he and Hattie and Parker were the only ones in the court room.

"Tom," the Judge had said, in a mocking yet affectionate tone, "I've done my best to keep you from that penitentiary; but what am I going to do if you won't help me? You make promises, and they're worthless; Even my laws seem to be worthless against your will for drink. It would be only natural now, wouldn't it, if I just assumed you weren't worth saving?"

At the word "penitentiary" Tom had stiffened perceptibly. He stared at the Judge with a look of brute terror.

"I've been doing some investigating," the Judge had continued, "Hattie here is a good woman and a hard worker. I understand you get along pretty well. They tell me you've only left her twice since you were married."

"He didn't go for long," Hattie had muttered.

Tom had a strained look, the look of one trying to grasp a difficult mathematical formula.

The Judge had raised his voice dramatically, "Here I am Tom, at Custis' last stand; I leave the choice to you. This is my decision: You can put yourself completely into the custody of Hattie here—that means having her at your side at all times, and letting her handle your money." He had lowered his voice. "Or you may prefer another kind of confinement, the penitentiary."

"No, suh, I don' want that." Tom had mumbled pathetically.

"All right. Any time you're seen without



Hattie, that's the end. I won't fool with you any more. You understand?"

"Yes suh."

And that 's the way it became. Wherever Tom was, there was Hattie following a few paces behind, waiting for him while he worked, becoming more slipshod and strange-talking through the years.

"I wonder if it could be true that Tom is at the bottle again," said Mrs. Satterfield, turning away from the window.

It was old gossip, and the source had been vague.

At least a month ago, someone said that they heard that Tom was drinking again. The story went that Tom was getting hold of the money somehow. With Hattie getting crazy it was no wonder that he could find a way to get it from her. The bootleggers were supposedly demanding an exorbitant sum from him and were taking him into Goochland County to get drunk. Some resident of Goochland County was said to have written to Judge Parker anonymously, exposing the plot.

"If it is true, we're out of a gardener for certain this time," said Mrs. Bidwell. "Parker was set in his mind when he told Tom the consequences—and he's been getting more crochety in the last years."

"Still I don't think he would want to do it," said Mrs. Darby, hopefully. "Anyway, it has been so long since we first heard the rumour, I think it must be mistaken. Something would have been done about it before."

"Well, let's hope so. We've all gotten to depend on him," said Mrs. Bidwell, putting her finger at the very heart of the matter, Mrs. Darby thought. They depended on him. Since their husbands had died he had carried on more or less alone, knowing what needed being done in the yard, where to chop, to trim and to mow. He was necessary. But then, she remembered sadly, they had all parted with things they had once thought necessary.

As the ladies were leaving, Mrs. Bidwell asked that Mrs. Darby tell Tom to come to her sometime in the next week, preferably on Wednesday.

"I don't know if he will be able to. I asked him to come Tuesday, but he said he'd be out of town," she answered.

But when he came to the kitchen door to be paid, she remembered to ask.

Hattie, after pocketing the money, propped herself up on the rail on the back porch and replied for him. She was holding the patient mongrel tightly in her arms. It was bleary-eyed and covered with the pink mange-rash.

"Tom is goin' away," she answered vaguely. Then she began repeating it in a sing-song way

to the animal.

A little bewildered, Mrs. Darby turned to Tom. "Well, if not Wednesday, any time next week she said would be acceptable."

He would not look at her. His hair she noticed had turned completely white. His overalls were held up by one strap; there were slashes in his trousers through which the dark skin showed.

"No'm, I ain't goin' to be here any time next week."

"Well, I suppose some other time will have to do."

"No'm" he said, looking at the ground, evasively.

As quickly as that she understood, because hers had been the way of life from which this old code had sprung. She knew that he couldn't explain any more than this to her about why he was going away. It was part of the things he could never say to her, an aristocratic white lady, the wife of the old Mayor. His drinking bouts belonged to another level of existence—a level known only to colored folks and Poor White Trash.

"When are you going?" she said, adopting the code.

"I was goin' to leave this morning, but I told the judge I had to cut Miz Dalby's grass."

He was going in the morning. All she could do was say, "Come in, Tom. I think I have some scraps for you," and then make no pretense of giving him mere "scraps", filling a bag with fresh beans, potatoes, thick slabs of ham, fruit and all that was left of a Pound cake.

As she watched them shuffling away in single file, she wondered what would become of Hattie. Then she went sadly to the phone to call Mrs. Bidwell.

When Tom died, there were only Mrs. Bidwell and Mrs. Darby left of the group. There had been many deaths that cold winter. Mrs. Darby had had a second stroke and was now limited to a certain number of times she might go up and down the stairs. Mrs. Satterwhite had died in her sleep.

"Tom has passed away."

Mrs. Bidwell had crossed over to Mrs. Darby's house just to discuss it. She was not supposed to leave her house, but she hated doctors, and always wanted to prove herself stronger than they supposed.

The two old ladies sat in the parlor discussing the death. They guessed it was for the best, actually. Tom had been most unhappy at the penitentiary, and his time was no where near up. It was certainly best for Hattie. The Sunday School groups had seen to it that her needs were taken care of; but when she'd



gotten someone to read Tom's ungrammatical, nearly illegible letter, pleading for her to get him out, she had been set into a frenzy. The witless woman was of course incapable of doing anything, but she seemed to be hounded by his plea. It was doubtful if she even knew where Tom was, or from what she was trying to save him, but she would stop any white person she saw on the street, and beg them to "Get Tom out!"

So they thought it was for the best; but they certainly would miss Tom. There weren't many of his kind any more. They had seen the new models, young brassy Negroes with bright feathers in their hats, speaking with pompous long words that, as often as not, they didn't use right. They had really loved old Tom, they agreed. They had been able to depend on him. You didn't see a Negro much any more that knew his place.

After Mrs. Bidwell had left, Mrs. Darby sat for a long time in the parlor, thinking. She couldn't say why, but Tom's death had made her very sad, beyond all proportion, she felt. When she opened the "Daily Eagle" she discovered that an article had been written about Tom. "Tom was our town Character," it began. But that wasn't true. A Character was someone who was very loud and outspoken; someone who was always saying witty things; someone who often bordered on the "indelicate", but had some trick of escaping the "uncouth." This wasn't a way of explaining why they all felt it mattered that Tom had died. Of course she herself wouldn't have known how to write it.

She finished the article. It narrated the "legend" succinctly, and ended with a rather sentimental eulogium. Then she ascended the stairs slowly, holding carefully onto the banister, and pausing at each landing to rest. She did not go immediately to her room but went to the end of the hallway, to the Back Room, the room where she stored her relics now. It had once been the Servant's Room. That was when "Grandma", her mother, had needed a colored girl to wait on her constantly. The first girl had had to be dismissed. She hadn't thought of that terrible affair in a long while. One night Mr. Darby had heard a man's voice in the room with the girl. He had told her to call the police, while he went into the room. She and "Grandma," trembling in the hall in their wrappers, had heard most of the

dreadful scene. "Grandma" had kept wringing her hands and murmuring "Oh Lordy, Oh Lordy, Oh Lordy." "You throw that knife at me," they had heard Mr. Darby saying bravely, "and you will roast in hellfire forever." Then he had described vividly the tortures of Hell. At the sound of the police coming up the stairs noisily, yelling "Where is he!" at the children who had let them in, the Negro had dropped the knife and fled down the back steps. The police went flying after him. She couldn't remember whether they had caught him or not, but she did remember that Mr. Darby had claimed to the children over the dinner table that he hadn't been scared in the least, because "They were all cowards, all of Them."

She came to this Back Room often, now that she was alone in the house, to peruse her relics. They were piled on the bed, cluttered the dresser, and crammed in boxes on the floor. She could not bear to throw away anything that had ever belonged to anyone she had ever loved. She still had Mr. Darby's hair oil, half full as it was at the time of his death; she had Anne's scuffed baby shoes, and the little middy blouses she had worn to "Mrs. Seely's School for Young Girls of Fine Family"; she even had the spangled dress Anne had worn to college dances in the twenties, the dress in which she had met her husband. She had all of Peter's long sweet letters from the University. In the corner was the globe that Peter had gotten for a birthday. There were Christmas ornaments that the grandchildren loved because they were sturdy and intricate, little snow-frosted cottages that fitted over a bulb, Santa Clauses with red felt suits and hairy beards, and birds with long bristly tails, that swayed when hung in the branches. On the bookcase there was even, at the end of a row of boys' books of the Horatio Alger type, a dog's skull. Walter had lost the little terrier on a hunting trip, and had been inconsolably grieved. Months later he had found the dog's skeleton in a thicket, picked clean by vultures. He had kept the skull in his room, and she had not been able to move it until after he had gone to college.

Mrs. Darby rummaged in the box at her side until she found a large scrap book. She tore out the article about Tom, and inserted it loosely in the book. Then, feeling tired and a little dizzy, she went to bed.



Mary Borden Hall '60

## WE LIE IN SILENCE

Lou Miller '58

We lie in silence,  
Silence shattered  
Only by the candle fire  
Which breaks  
The band of night  
Around us.  
That screaming agony  
Of sound  
Reverberates and shakes  
The quiet prisms dark  
Oh God,  
Let's blow the candle out.



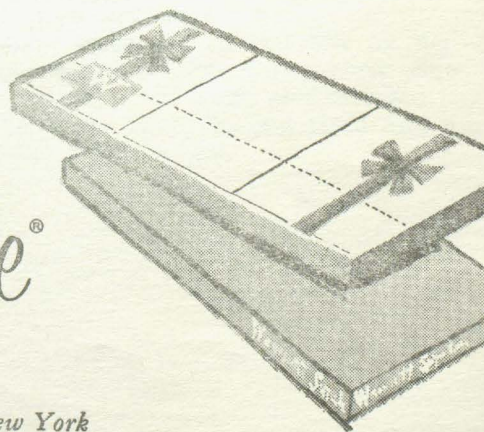


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